1:Heckewelder M-5 (ca. 1800)1819
NM7 Delaware NM7

was born on the river Delaware, was applied to by the women to bring down rain, and was well feed for the purpose. Having failed in his first attempt, he was feed a second time, and it happened that one morning, when my business obliged me to pass by the place where he was at work, as I knew him very well, I asked him at once what he was doing? "I am hired," said he, "to do a very "hard day's work."

Q. And, pray, what work?

A. Why, to bring down rain from the sky.

Q. Who hired you to do that?

A. The women of the village; don't you see how much rain is wanted, and that the corn and every thing else is perishing?

Q. But can you make it rain?

A. I can, and you shall be convinced of it this very day.

He had, by this time, encompassed a square of about five feet each way, with stakes and barks so that it might resemble a pig pen of about three feet in height, and now, with his face uplifted and turned towards the north, he muttered something, then closely shutting up with bark the opening which had been left on the north side, he turned in the same manner, still muttering some words, towards the south, as if invoking some superior being, and having cut through the bark on the south west corner, so as to make an opening of two feet, he said; "now "we shall have rain enough!" Hearing down the river the sound of setting poles striking against a canoe, he enquired of me what it was? I told him it was our Indians going up the river to make a bush net for fishing. "Send them home again!" said he, "tell them that this "will not be a fit day for fishing!" I told him to let them come on and speak to them himself, if he pleased. He did so, and as soon as they came near him, he told them that they must by no means think of fishing that day, for there should come a heavy rain which would wet

6:Harrington E-5 (1907-1910)1921
NM7 Delaware NM7
Lenape

however, several additions to our knowledge of the "Solid Face." It is as follows: 796*

"*Messingq or Solid Face Dance or Devil Dance.* —The principal leader in this dance is the Messingq, an Indian, who is dressed in a bearskin robe with a wooden face, one-half red and one-half black. He has a large bearskin pouch and carries a stick in one hand and a tortoise shell rattle in the other. He is a very active person. The dance is only for amusement, and men and women join in it. A large place is cleared in the woods, and the ground is swept clean and a fire built in the center. Across the fire and inside of the ring is a long hickory pole supported at each end by wooden forks set in the ground. On the east of this pole the singers stand; on the west end is a venison or deer, which is roasted. About daylight, when the dance is nearly over, all the dancers eat of the venison. They have a dried deer hide stretched over some hickory poles, and standing around it beat on the hide and sing. The dancers proceed around the fire to the right, the women on the inside next to the fire. After the dance is under headway the Messingq comes from the darkness, jumps over the dancers, and dances between the other dancers and the fire. He makes some funny and queer gestures, kicks the fire, and then departs. The Messingq is never allowed to talk, but frequently he visits the people at their homes. He is a terror to little children, and when he comes to a [292] [417]

10: Speck E-4, 5 (ca. 1925) 1931
NM7 Delaware NM7

Fig. 3—View of the Delaware Indian "Big House," Caney Creek, Okla.

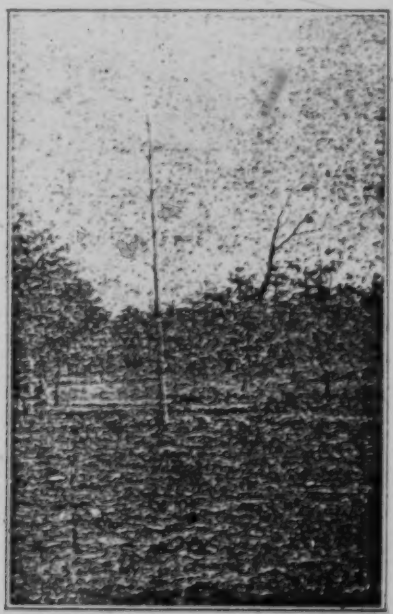

Fig. 4—View of trimmed tree upon which meat is hung at ceremony.

(Photos by Dr. Truman Michelson, Bur. Am. Ethnology, Wash., D. C.)

10: Speck E-4, 5 (ca. 1925) 1931

NM7 Delaware NM7

A turkey's [1] wing is used when they sweep out in the Big House. And besides, the Attendant carries a long stick as a poker and that is used when they stir up the fire, and it is the rule that they shall light a good bright fire every night as long as they perform the ceremony. And the Attendant-leader every evening walks around all over where they are camped about this Big House, holding a whip. And any person that they find that is causing unnecessary noise they correct. And the children are instructed. And he notifies them, telling them thrice "Come in! Come in! Come in!" And just recently they selected an officer from the Delaware Agency who is on guard all the time here while they are assembled, so that no one brings in liquor.[2]

[1] The specific term for the Wild Turkey (Meleagris gallipavo) is tcí'kanom, a term derived from the habit of this bird of scratching or "cleaning" the floor of the forest. In native Delaware ornithology, the order Gallinae is denoted by the generic term polee which denotes any of the birds of the group, though writers on Delaware social organization have occasionally rendered the term by "turkey." Happily no natural history obsequies are called for in the case of this splendid bird for it still survives in its original range where the Delawares knew it.

[2] The informant pointed to this as an indication of the lack of reverence, and indecency of behavior in the tribe under the influence of the white man's ways. Zeisberger (op. cit. p. 139) commented on the same thing as regards disorder at the feasts.

When any one of us considers the rule with all the obligations and instructions as these are properly carried out, it should be forbidden for one thing that those of our women who when they cannot cook[1] are not pure, be allowed to trouble about the cooking. And should not come in the Big House as long as they are affected with the sickness, because some pure children might be much contaminated, especially when they perform the Gamwing. And it is the rule that persons should abstain from bringing into the Big House any animals of whatever kind they may be which are domesticated.[2]

[1] Being in their catamenial periods.

[2] This has special reference to dogs, pigs, etc. Some discussion has previously been given concerning the status of the wild animals of the forest and those domesticated by man. The Attendants are expected to attack any such animals that come into the Big House and drive them away with their staffs.

And right here opposite from the door on the outside over there at a certain distance they make the fire. Two forked poles are set upright and a pole laid across, upon which they hang the big buckets in which they cook. Near here standing upright is a many-forked tree where meat is hung. And a big shelf is there at one side of the fireplace with two floors where they put the corn that is used. When hominy is made the female Attendants have for their duty every morning and evening to grind and make corn flour and hominy. Sometimes two or four mortars are used together with those long pounders.